

Washington, DC – Today, members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) joined community health advocates around the country in recognizing the Fourth Annual National Asian and Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, organized around the theme "Together We Can! Open Your Heart to Make a Difference."

"HIV/AIDS awareness continues to be lacking in the Asian and Pacific Islander Americans (APIA) community. One of the main stumbling blocks APIAs face in confronting the HIV/AIDS pandemic is the lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate health care for many American immigrant populations," says **Rep. Mike Honda (D-CA), Chair of CAPAC**. "This Congress, CAPAC has worked with both the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to support the full funding of \$610 million for the Minority AIDS Initiative that will ensure the continuity of providing HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care to underserved minority communities. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I will continue to support this funding."

There are an estimated 4,356 APIAs living with AIDS, a 54% increase since 2000 – the largest percentage increase for any racial/ethnic group. APIAs have disproportionately higher rates of preventable diseases that are co-factors for HIV/AIDS - including hepatitis B and tuberculosis - than white Americans. While these statistics illustrate the need for HIV/AIDS information and services in APIA communities, there continues to be lack of data and research that will fully show the full impact of HIV/AIDS in APIA communities.

"The number of HIV/AIDS cases continues to rise among Asians and Pacific Islanders. The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus is committed to ensuring that adequate resources are provided for prevention, treatment, and research. Much more needs to be done to address HIV/AIDS," said **Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU), Chair of the CAPAC Health Task Force**. "We are working to eliminate the disparities in healthcare coverage and treatment by improving data collection and breaking down cultural and language barriers for our communities."

For more information on National APIA HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, please visit the following website: <http://www.banyantreeproject.org/home.html> .